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“Our schools have changed as our society has changed.” -Diane Ravitch

Reading this chapter, truly made me reconsider all of my years in the different education systems I have had the opportunity to learn in. Going to a variety of different schools growing up I have experienced many different ways of teaching, whether it be in a parochial or a public school. However, regardless of their differences, the two completely different atmospheres obtained one common goal; teaching to the test. Classes were no longer about knowledge or learning things critical to surviving in the world, lectures and lesson plans were made so that you would get an “A” on the upcoming test. It is this very point that the schools rid the students of their opportunity to learn and grow and find what subjects they truly love.

One of the most beneficial philosophies I read about would be constructivism. The most beneficial way to get messages across, especially in a classroom, is hands on material.

Whether it be in science or math, the students should not be grouped together and expected to learn all the same. Rather the student should be able to draw his or her own conclusions.

Constructivism is beneficial as it encourages critical thinking and allows students to grasp the concept in the way in which they are comfortable learning. I feel like this dynamic of a classroom, is first taught when students in high school take AP classes for the first time. The learning is all on your own, not necessarily taught in the classroom. The knowledge you get is based on the effort you put in, and discussions take place about topics you have read. By allowing the constructivism to take place the students will begin to make connections to their own life and retain the information better, as opposed to having information thrown at them that doesn't make sense to the students.

“The claim that the public schools are in decline is not new.” - Diane Ravitch

This statement bothers me very much, as I am an advocate for the public education system. I believe that the public school system cannot fail you, if you do not fail it. By attending a parochial school for eight years, I have seen how teachers are not there to help you absorb the information, but rather absorb enough to pass the test and move on. If you did not understand the math, it was too bad because tomorrow is a new day and a new chapter. However, in my four years of public high school, I noticed and took advantage of the after hours teachers were there to help you with anything type of problem you may not understand. Although their primary goal was to teach to the test, the teachers would spend countless time either in the classroom or during their help hours making sure you fully understood the topic. This I suppose would fall under the Humanistic approach, however the high school teachers almost used both the constructivist and humanistic approach as the taught in class to have the students learn for themselves and establish connections; and then taught again to how the student can understand.

I feel the best way to learn, would be by morphing these to tactics as my teachers did' allow the students to draw their own conclusions, make their own connections, and then go back to class and have the teacher explain to the student the way the student is able to acquire the information.